

Basic Detail Report

Title Tall Case Clock

Date about 1735

Primary Maker Abel Parmele

Medium Case: Pine and maple. Dial: Cast brass. Works: Brass and steel.

Description Tall case clock in the Queen Anne, or late baroque, style, with a pine and maple case, a stepped pediment at the top of the hood, a brass clock movement, and a brass dial that is engraved "Abel/ Parmele/ New Haven/ Fecit".

The tall case clock consists of three major components: the removable hood, the removable dial and clock works, and the clock case. The dial and works sit on a horizontal board at the top of the clock case; the pendulum and weights (all separated from the clock) that drive the works would be suspended in the trunk, or narrow body, of the case. The hood slides over the works and sits at the top of the case. At each front corner of the top of the hood is a turned finial, consisting of a small ball, over a cone, over a disc. Each finial sits at the top of a tall, slender plinth. The top of the hood is flat at top center; it becomes stepped and curved as it widens to the projecting molding at the front and sides. The front of the hood has a glass door that is arched and recessed. The door is flanked by a column, tapered from bottom to top, that is joined to the edge of the door frame. Each side of the hood has a rectangular glass window. The trunk of the clock case has deep cove, or recessed quarter-circle, molding at the top, and a tall, rectangular door on the front. The front corners of the trunk are chamfered, or cut at an angle; each chamfer has a lamb's tongue stop at the top and

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bottom. The door has applied, projecting molding at all four sides, and a brass lock escutcheon at the center left side. Complex molding is applied to the front and sides of the case, where the trunk meets the base. The base has projecting panels of wood at the front and sides that form the base molding, shaped skirts, and straight feet. The front skirt is shaped with a hanging half circle in the center flanked by a flathead arch, a small spur, a sloping quarter-circle, and a cyma, or S-curve. Each side skirt is shaped with a raised half circle in the center flanked by a downward sloping cyma curve. The boards that form the skirts terminate in the feet of the clock case. The entire case is faux grained, or painted to imitate wood grain (later addition). Construction Details: A single, vertically-oriented backboard with squared top corners extends the full height of the hood and case. The hood does not have a back; it slides over the clock works to rest on the cove molding at the top of the trunk. The hood is constructed with two boards forming the lower sides; the windows on each side of the hood are cut from these boards. The pediment, constructed of a flat top and stepped and curved boards at the front and sides, strips of molding, and two plinths, is nailed together above the lower side boards. A board is nailed to the back of the pediment. The sides of the hood attach to a horizontal, three-sided frame with cyma, or S-curve, molding at the outer edges. The arched door on the hood is constructed of a four-sided frame that is tenoned and pinned at the corners. The column at each side of the door is constructed of three-quarters of a turned column glued to the front corner of the frame. The door pivots on a pair of brass hinges at the top right and bottom right corner. The backboard is probably

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nailed into a rabbet on each back corner of the sides of the trunk. The boards that form the sides of the trunk extend several inches above the bottom of the hood. The clock works rest on a seat board (replaced), or horizontal board immediately behind the dial. The seat board rests on the top edge of each side of the trunk (the seat board is detached). The cove molding is nailed to the front and sides of the top of the trunk. The front of the trunk is constructed of a frame that is held together with tenons at each corner and nailed to the front edges of the sides of the trunk. This is reinforced with quarter-round, vertically-oriented glue blocks at the interior front corners of the trunk. The door is constructed of a single board that is joined to the trunk with two brass hinges at the right side; there is a lock escutcheon on the center left side (the hardware on the door is replaced). The molding is nailed to the front edges of the door. The molding at the top of the base is nailed to the joint where the trunk meets the base. The backboard and sides of the trunk extend down to the bottom of the base. There is a gap inside the base between the sides of the trunk and the sides of the base. The front and sides of the base are nailed together. The base sits on a platform consisting of a bottom board and the facing that forms the front and side skirts and the feet. The bottom board is nailed to the underside of the base. The front and side skirts and the feet are constructed of facing that is joined together with dovetails at each corner, and nailed to the lower sides of the base. Each foot is reinforced with vertical glue blocks at the interior corners of the foot (two glue blocks are missing, each from a different left foot). Dial: The brass dial is square with an arched top. The center of the dial arch has an applied round plaque in

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the center. An engraved band on the plaque divides it into a round center

section surrounded by a ring. The ring is engraved "Strike" at the top and

"Silent" at the bottom. Each side of the ring is engraved with an abstract design

of curved lines that ends in an arrow pointing clockwise. The center section of

the plaque is engraved "Abel/ Parmele/ New Haven/ Fecit". To either side of the

plaque, gilded spandrels, or elaborate ornaments, are applied to the dial arch.

The middle of the square dial plate has an engraved chapter ring, consisting of a

ring of Roman numerals, inside a ring of minute gradations, inside a ring of

Arabic numbers from one to sixty in increments of five. The chapter ring is

bolted to the front of the dial (one bolt is missing). In the center of the chapter

ring is an arbor, or axle, around which the hour and minute hands pivot (the

hands, two washers, and a pin are missing from the main arbor). To either side

of the main arbor is a winding arbor, to wind the clock. An applied, ring-shaped

seconds dial is located above the main arbor, with a hand pivoting around the

center. A recessed, square calendar dial is located below the main arbor; a plate

or wheel rotates behind a square opening in the dial, indicating the date that is

engraved on the plate. Gilded spandrels are bolted to each corner of the dial

plate (the spandrels are loose); the spandrels each have a crowned head in the

center surrounded by dense, elaborately intertwined leaves, vines, and scrolls.

Clock Works Movement: weight powered Duration: eight day Materials: brass

Strike: English-style rack and snail Escapement: recoil The works have only four

pillars and ring on the quarter hour. The seat board is replaced. The works are

accompanied by a pendulum and two cylindrical weights. Condition: The hinge

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at the top right corner of the hood door is loose. The hardware on the case is replaced. A portion of the cove molding at the top left front corner of the case has split off. Two glue blocks are separated from the left feet. The feet are probably replaced. The case was faux grained in the nineteenth century. The case leans to the left. The following parts have separated from the dial: the hour hand, the minute hand, two washers, two slender pins, and a bolt. The chapter ring and lower spandrels are loose. A pair of weights, the pendulum, and the seat board are separated from the clock works. The seat board is replaced. The pendulum is wedged into the bottom board of the case.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (overall height x width x depth): 95 3/4 x 20 1/8 x 11 1/4in. (243.2 x 51.1 x 28.6cm)